Latest Art, Culture, Food, Tourism News, Views & Announcements

CULTURAL eMAGAZINE

INK OCHi

FIRST OF ITS KIND FROM KERALA

VOL-1 ISSUE - 38
JAN 01-07, 2021

38

Happy New Year!

COORG

Scotland of India

- Whisky Julep
- Grilled Pork Ribs

Goats Own Town
By: Anitha Menon

Introducing... Artist
Shyju Azhikode

What the body says...
By: Sara Hussain

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Editor's Note

New Year's Greetings!

As we begin the New Year of 2022, it seems almost unbelievable that we are now entering what would be the third year of a Global Pandemic.

New Year is the time for every people to bid farewell to the bygone year as well as to leave all the bad experience behind. It is the time to welcome a new year with positivity and new hopes.

Twelve months ago, everybody was excitedly ushering in the year 2021, hoping a turn of the calendar would bring a renewed sense of optimism after a turbulent 2020. (And turbulent is putting it mildly).

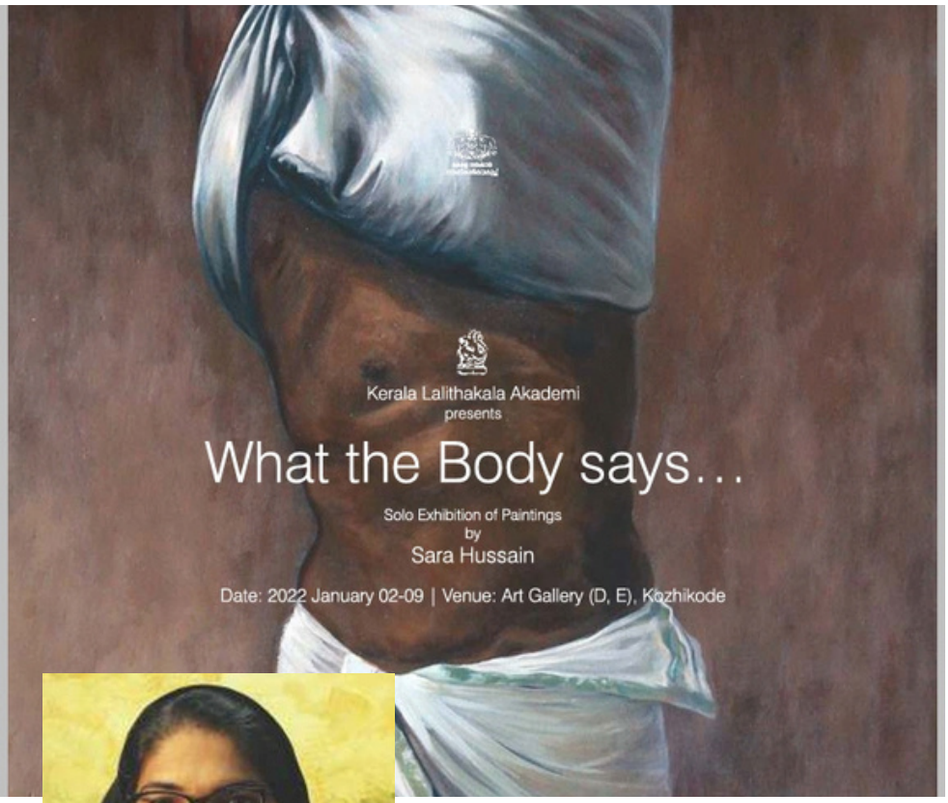
Of course, many positive things happened in 2021, but for many people, the doom and gloom that persisted in 2020 is still alive and well. Despite a widespread vaccination rollout, the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing – with a new, grim chapter underway thanks to the arrival of the Omicron variant – and society is still grappling with the global event that, much like the world wars in the 20th century, could become a defining period in people's lives.

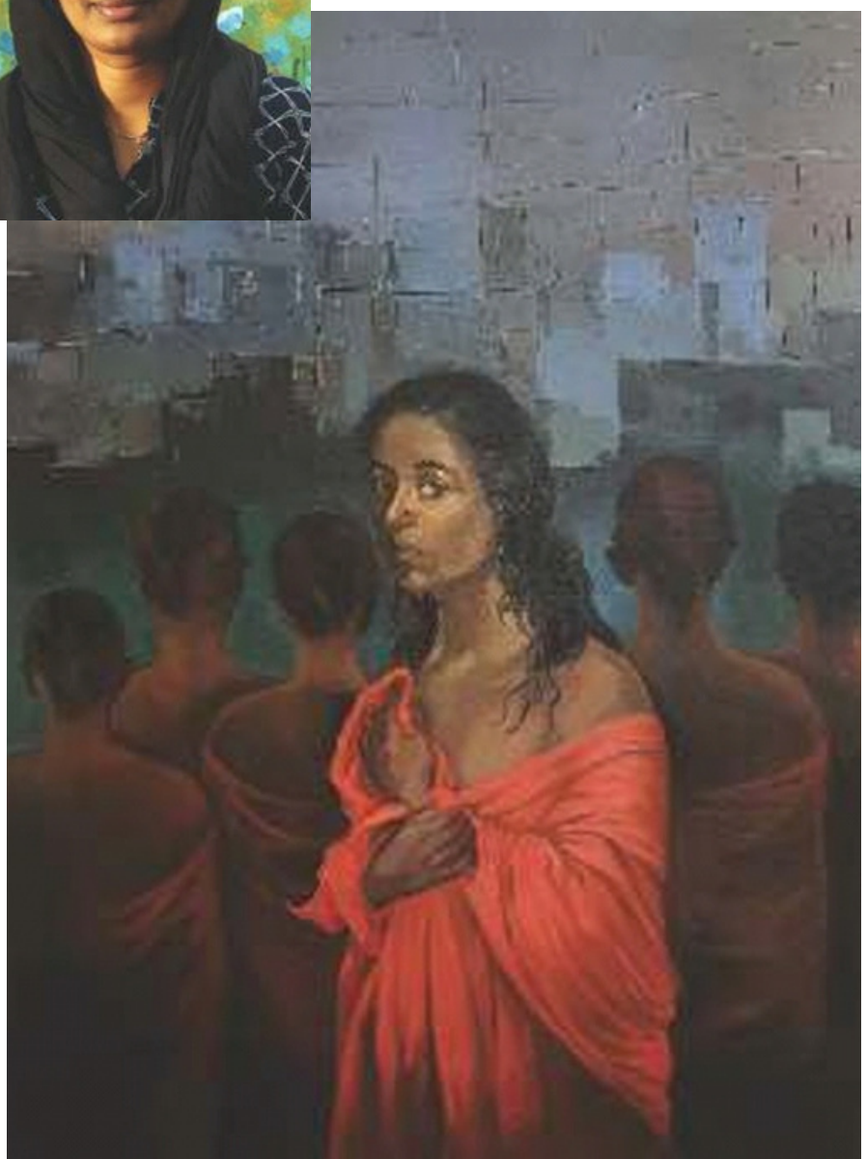
Given the lessons we've learned in the last year, we feel it's best to head into 2022 with a sense of cautious optimism, not expecting too much like we may have been guilty of at the tail end of 2020. Viruses don't care what it says on the calendar, after all.

Wishing you a new year fully loaded with new adventures and new experiences. I love you!

Happy New year!

Happy Reading...!!
Varghese T. Thomas





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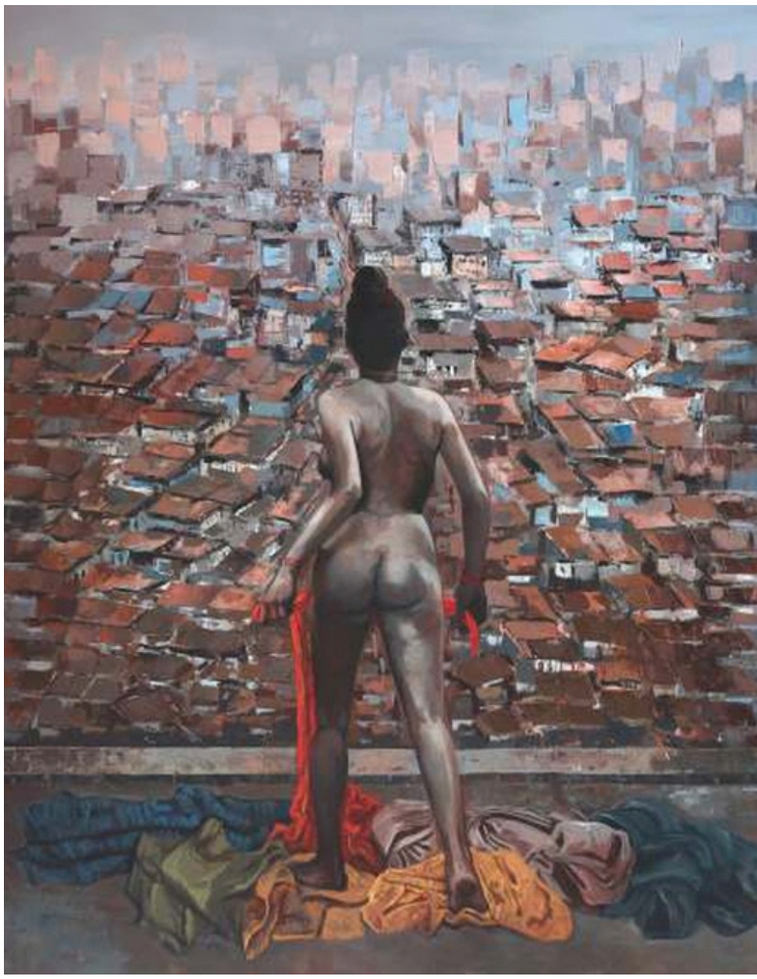

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Goats Own Town MATTANCHERRY

Collage by Anitha Menon

By: Anitha Menon

Think of Mattancherry, and one can't help thinking about images of herds of goats wandering down the ancient roads, wending their expert way through the chaotic traffic. Goats of all sizes and hues, and their kids take possession of the roads every morning and explore every nook and corner to feed their hunger.

Nothing escapes their eyes – be it a green branch to arch up to, a partially open garden gate to slip through, a peeling wall poster, they taste it all. During the course of their capers, they rest by the roadside, on pavements, sometimes balanced on thin walls, or on parked vehicles, peppering their path with goat pellets.

They own the place fearlessly and look at passers by with intelligent eyes that seem to decipher this world flawlessly. >>

Goats Own Town

Come evening, they make their sure-footed way back to their owners, often sharing the living space of the owners houses, erasing distances between the two worlds.

Goats make rather good pets, I'm told, which reminds me of Picasso's goat named Esmeralda, probably his model for his goat sculptures. In Spanish, to be like a goat means to be one who has whimsical ideas or thinks out of the box, an important creative attribute, indubitably!!

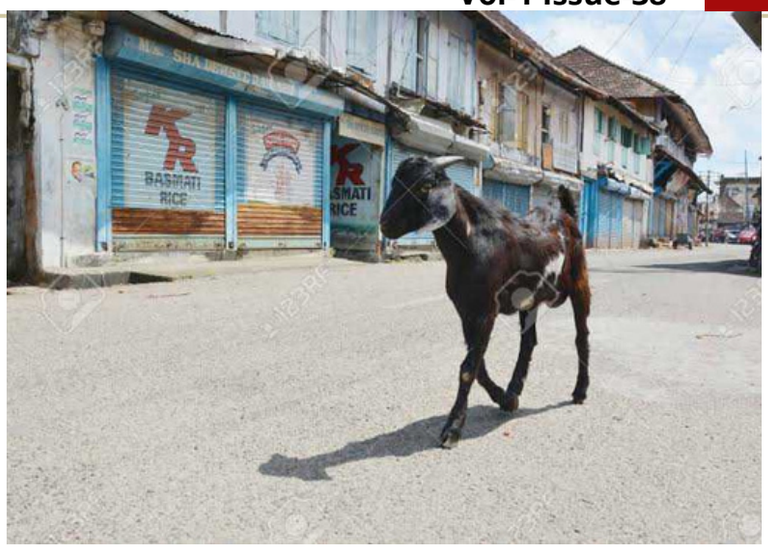
Talking about artists and goats, Chagall comes to mind. Goats were an important aspect of his life and appeared in his paintings in varied ways. To him they were symbols of sacrifice, scapegoats that expressed how Jews were treated during the Holocaust.

Another artist who incorporated a goat in his work is Robert Rauschenberg, who in his ' Combines ' blurred the line between art and everyday objects. He got a taxidermied angora goat from a local office furniture shop, added a rubber tyre around it and placed it on top of his canvas, placing it in such a way that it looked like the goat was put to pasture. He called his work ' Monogram ' looking at the way the tyre went round the goat. He added other found objects like a heel, a tennis ball placed behind the goat adding to the interpretations of the work. >>

Goats Own Town

Coming back to the goats of Mattancherry, they are one of the ultimate symbols of the place, happily trudging lanes, feeding themselves, even birthing by the roadside, lambs that walk their first steps on Mattancherry lanes lined with ancient warehouses. They merge into the essence of this old town belonging as much to its history as to its present.

Yet life is not always good or fair to them. I'm referring to the story of Perumal Murugan's 'Poonachi, Or The Story of a Black Goat,' the tiniest, almost kitten sized, in a litter of seven. Gifted to an old couple, she fought great odds to survive, later found love and birthed her own magical litter of seven lambs, however, ravaged by the tragedies of a scorched earth that left the people and goats with nothing to eat, she succumbs to her fate.



She experiences the whole spectrum of emotions, ranging from love, desire for freedom, loss, and the changing affections of the humans who brought her up, powerlessness in the face of a heartless regime – much like many of the ordinary human life around her. >>

INKochi eMagazine | Dec 31, 2021- Jan 06, 2022
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Goats Own Town

Everything she held dear to her heart, Poovan, goat that she gave her heart to, the kids she gave birth to – all of them snatched away by humans for sale, slaughter or sacrifice. Poonachi was a miracle gone awry, a proof to the human condition that no matter how much one gives to the heart, it will never be enough.

There are several other famous goats in art, literature, culture, religion … but I am limiting myself to these few examples to go with a collage art that I created. My humble contribution to this caprine spirit. <>

Writer - **Anitha Menon**, former faculty, Department of English, The Cochin College, at present working as counselor, IGNOU, based in Kochi, finds writing about her favorite topics as engrossing as her full time practice of art under the name, Anu Zafaran. She has been part of several group and solo art exhibitions.

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Vocal: GAYATHRY RAJIV (Mazhavil Manorama Super 4 Contestant)
BGM: AJAYAN K. S. | Studio: GEETHAM MEDIA STUDIO, KOCHI
Recorded, Mix & Mastered: JINTO JOHN
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INTRODUCING ARTIST...

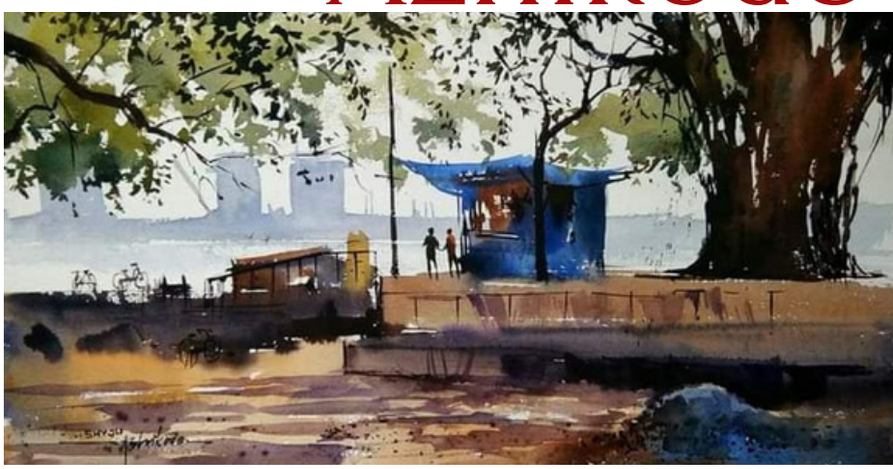
Shyju Azhikodue

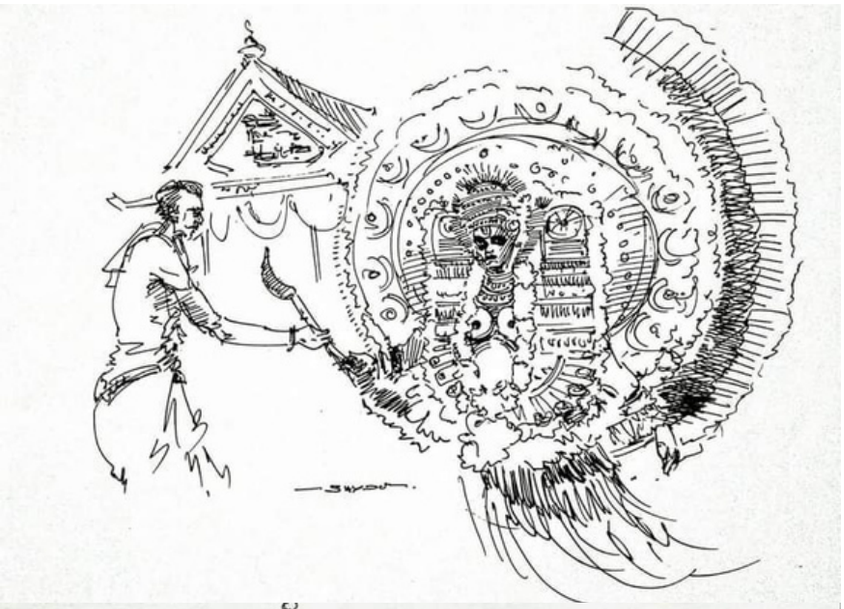
Shyju Azhikode is a freelance watercolour artist. Studied KGCE in Fine Arts from Gitanjali School of Arts Kannur, Kerala. He is an art teacher in Cochin Kalabhavan Acadrmy (Kannur Branch).

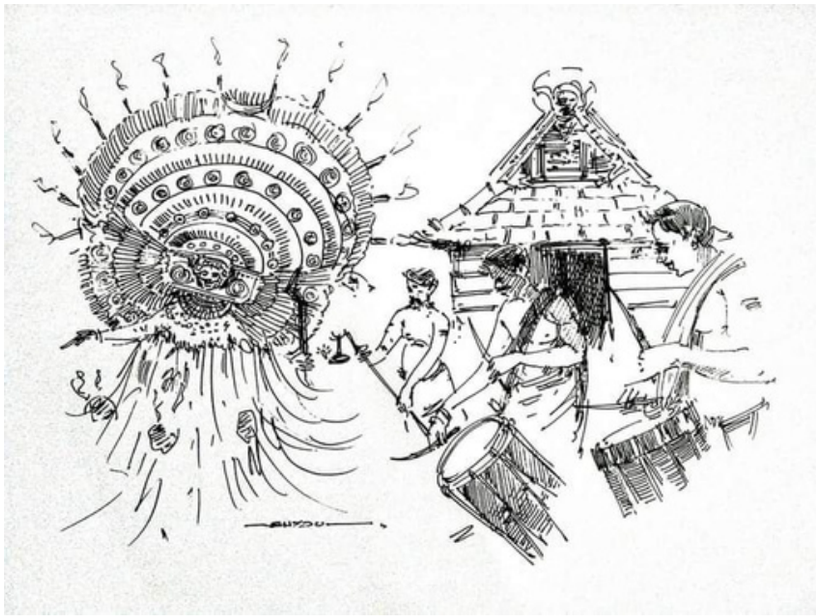
He has participated in several group exhibitions...
Nirakkoott at Kannur, The artists at Thrissur, Species at Kannur, The Dweep at Lakshadweep & Kalasrishti at Bangalore. Participated in many art camps and workshops.

Shyju Azhikode

Shyju Azhikode







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Of coffee, wilderness, history, culture, food, uniqueness of marriage, festival and dance form

COORG
They are unique from rest of the country and hence British compared Coorg with Scotland and called Scotland of India.

By: Sandeep Yara

The native people of Coorg are worshippers of nature and women are given immense respect in this society: a mother is held in the highest regard! Another surprising thing is that their language does not have words for dowry a common practice in Indians which has reduced a lot in this era or prostitution which seems to be absent from their society! Women in this society are mostly found to be educated and know their rights which is obviously because of their culture of appreciating women! >>

The customs and traditions of the Coorg people are quite different from other Indians and I say that from experience, their hospitality is just wonderful with the amount of respect they have towards people!

Coorg (Kodagu) is synonymous to Indian coffee

While talking about Coorg, coffee deserves the first mention. Besides visiting a coffee plantation, we could first hand see the various stages that coffee seeds go through before getting into our cuppa. Carpets of coffee seeds laid to sun dry outside the houses is a common sight in Coorg.

>>

Talacauvery:

Talacauvery is a holy pilgrimage for the Hindus. Located at the Brahmagiri hills and considered to be the origin of the river Cauvery, it is situated 1276 m above sea level. At present there is a tank at the place where Cauvery is believed to have originated. The river originates as a spring supplying water to this tank. The water then flows underground to emerge as the Cauvery river at some distance. This tank is considered to be a holy place to bathe on special days.

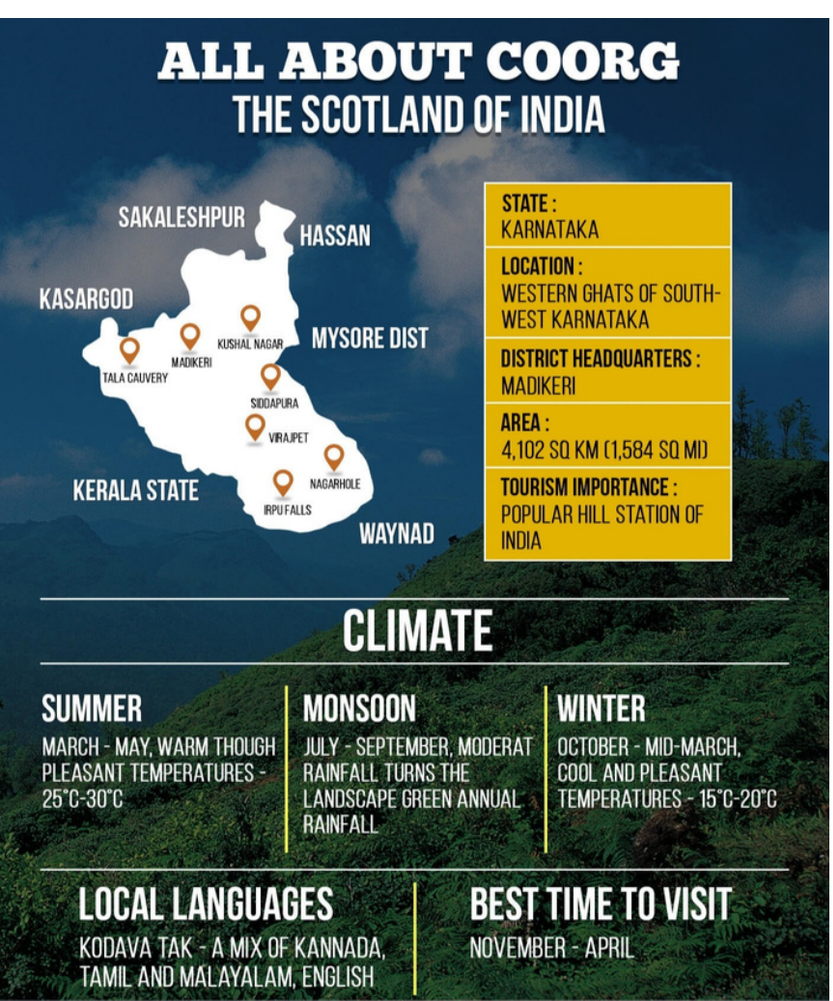
Nearby there is also a small temple dedicated to Lord Agastheeswara and frequently visited by the pilgrims.

There is a legend saying that Cauvery was held captive by the sage Agastya in his kamandalu and Lord Ganesha in the form of a crow made the kamandalu topple at the top of this hill when Sage Agastya was meditating. People believe that taking bath in Talacauvery is very sacred and it can relieve man from all his sufferings. >>

One of the biggest attractions here, is Bhagamandala, the confluence of three rivers Cauvery, Kannike and Sujyoti. Bhagamandala is 8 km from Talacauvery. There are nearby temples devoted to Lord Ganapati, Subramanya and Vishnu. An annual festival is celebrated during the month of October/November every year when the river gushes out of the tank in a predetermined moment and thousands of pilgrims gather to witness the rise of the fountainhead.

During this festival the region becomes very attractive with thousands of lights lit in the temples.

Apart from being a place of sanctity, Talacauvery is also a must-visit tourist place when you visit Coorg. The temple is situated in a breathtaking location, in the lap of the Brahmagiri hills. The undulating layers of the hills with stretches of green meadows is truly picturesque seen from the temple. A wonderful tourist place to relax in leisure. >>



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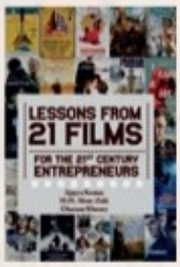

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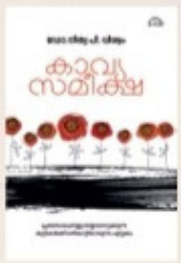

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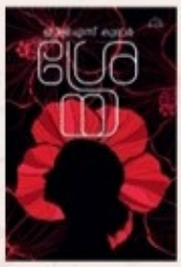

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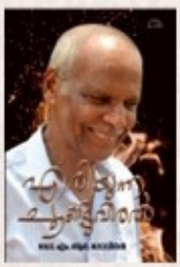
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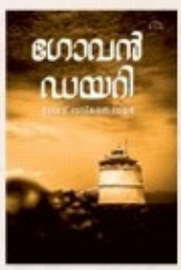

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Coorg History: The first mention of Coorg or Kodagu as it is locally and officially known is found in the Tamil Sangam Literature around 2 nd Century AD. From then on, the history of Kodagu has largely been recorded in its orality, a social history of its own people and their ways of living and relationships with the unpredictable nature that Coorg inhabits. The people of Kodagu have been small scale agriculturists with hunting and gathering supplementing subsistence until the arrival of coffee plantations with the British.

>>

As in any thick-forested hilly terrain that has harsh climatic conditions, the people of Kodagu have found means of survival that has made their minds and bodies best suited to rigor. From the well documented times of Lingayat kings (1600? 1834), to the rule of Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan in late 18th Century and the coming of British in 1834, Kodagu has had a chequered political history. After independence from the British, Kodagu was a separate C grade state until 1956 when it was merged with the then Mysore, now Karnataka state.
>>

Coorg Culture: As has been noted by many, the culture of Coorg varies significantly from those of their neighbours leading to speculations of their origin. People have also argued that it is the isolated hilly region that Coorgs inhabit and the non-involvement of caste-hindus that has led to quite a different culture among the Coorgs. The difference in culture is manifest through its religion, language, food habits, costumes, societal structure, festivals, performances, and so on. The Kodava religion mainly revolves around ancestor worship and worship of river Kaveri. The language of Kodavas also known as Kodava, is one of the oldest Dravidian languages. As is well known, the manner of dress among Kodava is known for its striking difference. >>

The saree which women wear has its pleats behind and the loose end on the front. This style it is noted suits the hilly and rainy terrains. The male dress which is now largely worn only during rituals is called kupya-chele, consists of a black long coat among other things. The societal structure which forms one of the most important feature of Coorg culture is its clan-based system where the Kodava society is divided into clan system and there are about 850 clans known today. Each of these clans usually trace their origin to one village in Kodagu where they have a place of ancestral worship known as kaimada. This clan system and forms of worship, different from dominant religions have fascinated anthropologists and commoners alike. >>

Uniqueness of Coorg Marriage: Among the many communities that inhabit Coorg, the community of Kodavas predominantly have been representing Kodagu. The practices of Kodavas that vary drastically from the neighbouring Kannada or Malayalam speakers have evinced much interest amongst many. One of the most colourful and enjoyable rituals of the Kodavas is their wedding ceremony. Kodava wedding unlike Hindu wedding, is very participatory where everyone involved family, clan members, villagers, extended members of family and friends equally involve.

What sets apart a Kodava wedding is the practice where elders solemnise rituals, without the involvement of a priest. Also to be noted that it is the mothers of bride and groom who tie maala (a piece of jewellery, representing wedding status) to their son and daughter signalling that they are wedded. That meat including the famous Kodava pork — pandi curry, and liquor is served, there are drums and dance makes the wedding vibrant and an event that one looks forward to. >>

PANDHI CURRY
THE KODAVA PEOPLE LOVE THEIR PORK AND THE DELICIOUS PANDHI CURRY WILL LEAVE YOU WANTING MORE. SERVED WITH AKKI ROTI (RICE ROTI) OR KADAMBUTTU (RICE DUMPLINGS), THE PORK CURRY IS COOKED ON ALL SPECIAL OCCASIONS.
BAMBOO SHOOT CURRY
A FAVOURITE DURING THE RAINY SEASON, THE BAMBOO SHOOT CURRY IS ANOTHER LOCAL SPECIALTY IN COORG. COOKED IN MUSTARD, RED CHILLIES AND GROUND COCONUT, THE DISH IS MOSTLY SERVED WITH RICE.
KADUMBUTTU
ALSO KNOWN AS STEAMED RICE DUMPLING, KADUMBUTTU IS POPULAR FOOD IN COORG. IT IS MOSTLY SERVED WITH PANDHI CURRY OR CHICKEN CURRY AND IS PREPARED ON ALL MAJOR OCCASIONS IN COORG.

Coorg Festivals: The cultural life of the people of Coorg centers on the village and the family. Religious festivals, marriages, births and the three major festivals of Kailpodh, Kaveri sankramana and Puttari(Huttari) are the main events of the lives of the people of the town of Coorg.

There are just a few festivals that the people of Coorg observe with great dedication. Over the years, as more and more influence from Hinduism has become present in the lives of the people of Coorg, there as also been an incursion of the Hindu religion as well.

Here is a list of the main festivals and when the Coorg community celebrates them:

- Ugadi – February
- Shivarati – March
- Kailpold – September
- Kaveri Shankaramana – October
- Puttari – November/December

The Shivaratri and the Ugadi festivals are both primarily of Hindu origin and do not require much of an introduction. However, all of the other festivals are unique in purpose and celebration. >>

Coorg Dance form: Equally colourful, vibrant and participatory are dance forms of Kodavas. The week after the harvest festival Puthari is usually the time for the villagers to gather in what is called mand and dance. While bolkkaat, Kolaat, Kattiyaat among others are for men and the popular ummattaat is for women. Like many tribal dances, what is interesting about dances among Kodavas is that they are not individual based but are group-based. There is no restriction or any rigid framework for who should dance and how. The dance largely works on improvisation and is open. Also very popular today is the dance during the last leg of Kodava wedding. This dance for the wedding valaga (music) is danced within a loose stylistic framework and is free-flowing and enjoyable. >>

Coorg Wildlife & Ecology

Coorg has four main types of vegetation. The Evergreen forests of the north & west and the Moist deciduous and Dry deciduous forests in the central and southern parts of the district and isolated evergreen or Shola forests are found nestled between the folds of the mountain slopes which are covered by grasslands.

It has three wildlife sanctuaries, Brahmagiri Wildlife Sanctuary, Talakaveri Wildlife Sanctuary and Pushpagiri Wildlife Sanctuary and one national park, Nagarahole or Rajiv Gandhi National Park. Among these Pushpagiri is located in the northern part of Coorg and has rare and endangered flora and fauna. In fact it has been designated as one of the important bird areas of the world. The rich Kadamakkal reserve forest is a part of the sanctuary. The name of the sanctuary, Pushpagiri, has been derived from the highest peak in the region. Kumaraparvat is another smaller peak. The sanctuary is surrounded by Bisle reserve forest and Kukke Subramanya forest ranges. >>

Golden Temple (Namdroling Monastery), Coorg Overview

Namdroling Monastery, situated at a distance of 34 km from the Coorg, is the largest teaching centre of the school of Tibetan Buddhism known as Nyingmapa. Popularly known as the 'Golden Temple', the Namdroling Monastery holds some excellent examples of Tibetan architecture and artwork, as seen with the elaborately decorated temple tower and ornate outer walls, intricately adorned with beautiful murals.

It is spread over an area of 80 square feet and was built from Bamboo which was donated by the Indian Government to the Tibetans in exile. Today, it houses many auxiliary structures like educational institutions and a hospital and being home to about 5,000 members of the Sangha community. <>

According to legend the Mint Julep first made print in a book by John Davis in 1803, described as being a "dram of spirituous liquor that has mint in it, taken by Virginians in the morning." However most historians agree the drink was engineered much earlier, perhaps in the early 1700's.

According to historians, long ago there was an Arabic drink called juleb which was a concoction of water and fragrant rose petals. Some people believe that when this drink made its way across Europe the more readily available mint leaves were added instead, thus the Mint Julep.

The classic Mint Julep of today also adds powerful alcohol into the equation and was reportedly enjoyed primarily by Northeastern farmers in the morning before they set out to tend the crops. Some have even suggested that it was the cultural equivalent to today's morning coffee.

Whisky Julep

By: Whisky Evangelist Fraser Jones

Ingredients:

50ml Single Malt Whisky
10ml (2 barspoons) sugar syrup
6 mint leaves

Glass - 10 oz glass
Garnish - large mint sprig

Method:

Lightly press Glenrothes Select Reserve, sugar and mint in bottom of glass for 15 secs, fill with crushed iceand churn for 10 secs, top with crushed ice and mint sprig.

From the Kitchens of
EVOLVE BACK
- Grilled Pork Ribs -

At Evolve Back, Coorg soul food finds body and spirit to seduce your palate in three awesome temples to the culinary arts. The impressive culinary spread at the resort is outdone only by the breathtaking settings of its restaurants.

Grilled Pork Ribs – served with mashed potatoes and sautéed vegetables.

Ingredients:

For Pork Rib Marination:

1. Pork Ribs – 400 grams
2. Cooking Oil – 100 grams
3. Vinegar White – 100 ml
4. White Pepper Powder – 50 grams
5. Salt – as per Taste

For Grilling in Non-Stick Pan:

6. Cooking Oil – 100 ml
7. Sugar – 50 ml

For Mashed Potato:

8. Potato Boiled Grated and Mashed – 150 grams
9. Cooking Cream – 10 grams
10. Butter – 10 grams
11. Salt – as per Taste
12. Parsley Chop – 1 gram

For Sauteed Vegetables:

13. Carrot Blanched – 25 grams
14. Beans Blanched – 25grams
15. Cauliflower Blanched – 25 grams
16. Green Peas Blanched – 25 grams
17. Broccoli Blanched – 25grams
18. Butter – 20 grams
19. White Pepper Powder – as per Taste
20. Salt – as per Taste >>

Method:

For Pork Ribs:

1.Clean The Pork Ribs, wash and pat dry.
2.Marinate all ingredient with Pork Ribs.
3.Rest for half an hour.
4.Heat a Non-Stick Pan and grill the marinated Pork Ribs both Side 10-15 minutes or till Ribs both sides become brown.
3.Now roast this Pork Ribs in (Preheated 180 degree) Oven till Well Cooked.

For Mashed Potato:

1.Heat Butter in a Non-Stick Pan
2.Add boiled grated Potato
3.Add salt and Pepper Powder and mix well
4.Sauté this potato becomeS hot, and keep aside.

For Sauteed Vegetables:

1. All Vegetables blanched and keep aside.
2.Now Heat Butter in a Non-Stick Pan and add blanched Vegetables
3.Add Salt and white pepper powder, mix well and keep aside. <>

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Velavadar National Park
Gujarat

OneWeek
OneShot

By:
Sudhir Shivaram

Portraying KERALA

PC: SAAHIL RAHMAN

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